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Laws apply to CIA source

It is nothing short of tragic that the Justice Department is not prosecuting a former Mexican official who has been implicated in an \$8 million stolen car ring.

The cars were stolen in southern California and smuggled across the border into Mexico.

A U.S. attorney says he recommended prosecution in November, but the Justice Department has not acted, ostensibly because the suspect is considered an "absolutely indispensable" CIA source in Mexico and Central America.

Certainly we don't want to make the CIA's job more difficult. However, if the accusations are true, the man has broken the law — deliberately and many times over.

There is no law, constitutional prov-

ision or court precedent that gives anyone the license to steal merely because he works for the CIA. Failure to prosecute him merely because he is an important CIA source would be grossly unfair to the American people, and it would set a dangerous and shameful precedent.

We suggest that U.S. Sens. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, and John Tower, R-Texas, pressure the Justice Department to prosecute the suspect immediately and vigorously.

After all, Texas has two of the nation's largest border cities — El Paso and Brownsville — and auto smuggling thrives in both cities. Failure to prosecute auto smugglers hurts southern Texans, as well as southern Californians.